

# Who, Whom, Whose, and Who's

## ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

**clause:** a part of a sentence, that in itself contains a subject and a verb

**dependent clause:** cannot stand by itself as a complete sentence

**predicate pronoun:** a pronoun that follows is, are, was, were, etc., and that refers back to the subject

**contraction:** two words brought together in one with an apostrophe replacing missing letters.

**possessive form:** an adjective form of a noun or a pronoun showing ownership or belonging

## HERE'S HOW

**Step 1: If the sentence is a question, rewrite it as a statement.** This will help determine the correct form of the pronoun.

**Step 2: Decide if the pronoun is used as a subject or an object.**

**Step 3: Select the correct form according to the usage rules as follows:**

- **Rule 1: Use who as the subject** of a sentence or a dependent clause.

### EXAMPLES

Who gave you the parakeet? (subject of a sentence)

My sister is the one who will buy the fish food. (subject of a clause)

- **Rule 2: Use who as a predicate pronoun.** A predicate noun or predicate pronoun follows a form of the verb to be.

### EXAMPLES

Your best friend is who?

- **Rule 3: Use whom as the direct or indirect object** of a verb or as the object of a preposition.

### EXAMPLES

Whom did you ask about pet stores? (direct object of sentence)

The vet whom we called gave good advice. (direct object in a clause)

You gave whom a turtle? (indirect object)

From whom did you buy it? (object of a preposition)

The person to whom I spoke was Raymond. (object of a preposition)

- **Rule 4: Use who's as a contraction, whose as a possessive.** Who's means who is or who has. Whose is a pronoun that shows possession or ownership.

### EXAMPLES

Who's feeding the cat? (who is)

Who's been to the zoo? (who has)

Whose dog is barking? (ownership)